



NEW YEAR NUMBER

1900



OLD AND NEW YEAR.

The year which has now come to a close was one of the most remarkable in Hawaiian history. It was the first full year of political affiliation between the Islands and the United States and as such it contributed more than any other one period of equal length to the welfare of the group. Indeed in the Hawaiian calendar it must rank in material progress above some decades. Fortunate as other years have been their benefits to the people of these Islands were circumscribed by a variety of depressing political circumstances which annexation removed. With the assurance of stable government a larger share than ever before of money made on this soil remained for local investment. Before that time our capitalists looked abroad for guarantees of financial safety. Vast sums derived from commerce and the sale of Island products went permanently to the United States and Europe. But the first year of American sovereignty here witnessed the acquisition of local confidence and as a result Hawaii and its political capital have advanced with leaps and bounds.

Two great facts stand out in the progress of the year—the increase of productive industry and its adjuncts, and the increase of white population. New plantations have been started under most encouraging circumstances and old ones have been improved. The price of sugar never ruled so high. Some attempt was also made to introduce new manufactures. Many companies have been organized. Some financial institutions opened and the needs of growing business have been met by splendid new commercial structures. Railways have been planned and started; rapid transit for this city is now being provided for. The export and import trade has expanded prodigiously and new lines of ships have sought the favor of the port. An era of modern public improvement began during the year of which Honolulu's new sewers are a type. But one factor of depression came into being—the few cases of bubonic plague. In a measure that checked business for the moment but it could not check the prosperity which the year had founded on the rock of production and credit.

In default of a census it is not possible to say how much the population of the Islands has expanded since the first of January a year ago. But the demand upon the area of domicile, the crowding of the streets, the strange faces everywhere, the passenger lists of steamers and sailing vessels—all these tell their own story. Honolulu is growing. Hawaii is growing, and nothing seems likely to stop an influx which is caused by an intelligent conception of the fact that coming events are likely to do more than past events have done to open new fields of labor and investment here.

Having so much to be thankful for during the year that is gone it should be easy to take courage for the future. There can be no doubt that the business of the Island will go on rising to the flood and bear them on to fortune. Looming ahead are wharves, railroads, municipal rapid transit, new hotels, new business blocks, new industries and new plantations; possibly the beginnings of a Pacific cable and probably the institution of Territorial and municipal rule and of extensive Federal works. The prospect is in every way encouraging and whether this year is to be counted the last of the nineteenth century or the first of the twentieth it is full of cheerful omens for Hawaii.